

NEW YORK HERALD.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

OFFICE: N. W. CORNER OF FULTON AND NASSAU STS.

TERMS: In advance, \$5 per annum; if paid quarterly, \$12 per annum; if paid monthly, \$15 per annum. Single copies, 10 cents. Foreign postage, 25 cents per annum. The Herald is published every day, except on Sundays and public holidays. It is sold by all news-vendors. The Herald is published by the New York Herald, No. 100 Nassau Street, New York.

Volume XXVII. No. 120

AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

WINTER GARDEN, Broadway.—The Enchantress.
WALLACK'S THEATRE, No. 94 Broadway.—LADY OF LIONS.
NEW GOWNEY THEATRE, Bowery.—MAGNET.
OLYMPIA THEATRE, 455 Broadway.—Fanny and John.
BARNUM'S AMERICAN MUSEUM, Broadway.—The Great Exhibition of 1862.
RYAN'S MINSTRELS, Manhattan Hall.—The Great Exhibition of 1862.
NIRLO'S SALOON, Broadway.—The Great Exhibition of 1862.
NEEDHAM CONCERT HALL, 539 Broadway.—The Great Exhibition of 1862.
CANTERBURY MUSIC HALL, 539 Broadway.—The Great Exhibition of 1862.
PARISHAN GARDEN OF WONDERS, 565 Broadway.—The Great Exhibition of 1862.

New York, Friday, May 2, 1862.

THE SITUATION.

We publish to-day the correspondence which occurred between Commodore Farragut and Mr. Monroe, Mayor of New Orleans, on the appearance of our mortar fleet before that city. The Commodore's letter is a blunt and sailor-like demand for the unconditional surrender of the city, for the hoisting of the Union flag over the City Hall, Mint and Custom House, and the removal of all flags emblematic of any other sovereignty than that of the United States. He requests that the Mayor shall restore order, quell disturbance, and call upon all good citizens to return to their vocations, promising protection to all such, but commanding that no one shall be molested for expressing sentiments of loyalty to the government or exhibiting evidences of pleasure at witnessing "the old flag" once more flying over the city. Upon this point the words of Commodore Farragut are very emphatic. He says: "I shall speedily and severely punish any person or persons who shall commit such outrages as were witnessed yesterday by armed men firing upon helpless women and children for giving expression to their pleasure at witnessing the 'old flag.' The Mayor responds in a communication, somewhat bombastic, comprising a little pluck and a good deal of folly, in which he admits the impossibility of resistance, as the army upon which he depended has deserted him; but he refuses to haul down the secession flag, and declares, in the name of the people, that their allegiance to the rebel government remains intact, despite the necessity of yielding to the conquerors. His response is anything but complimentary to General Mansfield Lovell, and upon the whole reveals the desperate condition to which the commercial capital of the South has been reduced by the sudden appearance of the Union mortar boats before its levee, which Mayor Monroe designates "an overpowering armament."

A Collector of Customs for New Orleans, in the person of Mr. Charles L. Lathrop, has already been appointed and confirmed by the Senate. Mr. Lathrop was formerly a resident of New Orleans, but left that city on the outbreak of the rebellion, being a sterling Union man.

The forces of General Halleck had a skirmish with the rebels near Purdy on Wednesday morning, on which occasion a reconnaissance in force was made from the right wing, on the Memphis and Ohio road. Our troops met a force of rebel cavalry, who died in great haste and could not be rallied. They were pursued to Purdy. Our forces, on taking possession of the town, burnt two bridges and ran a locomotive into the river. Three prisoners were taken. Our men then retired, having cut off all railroad communication with the country north of Corinth, which has been a great source of rebel supplies.

There is nothing new to report from Fort Wright. The siege progresses steadily, and a speedy termination is confidently predicted. A rebel gunboat had arrived from New Orleans and joined the fleet of Captain Hollins.

The surrender of Fort Macon, North Carolina, is announced in the Richmond *Enquirer* of Wednesday, a copy of which reached the War Department yesterday. We give in another column a sketch of the fort and of the rebel garrison in charge there at the time of the capture. In addition to this cheering news, the President also received information that General Beauregard was evacuating his position at Corinth and falling back on Memphis.

General Mitchell telegraphs that his forces had a brisk skirmish with the rebels at Bridgeport, Ala., in which the enemy were completely routed, after attempting to burn a railroad bridge, which Gen. Mitchell saved by the valor of his troops. The rebels had five regiments of infantry and 1,500 cavalry at the bridge. He says that he now holds Huntsville securely, and that the campaign in that vicinity is ended, and that no flag but that of the Union now floats in Northern Alabama.

The Secretary of War received a despatch from General Halleck yesterday stating that a small force of the First Missouri Volunteers, numbering 150, under Major Hubbard, had defeated the rebel Colonel Coffee and Stearns, with a force of 600 Indians, at Neosho, on Saturday last, and captured 62 prisoners, 76 horses and a large quantity of arms.

Thus the record of victories received in Washington yesterday gives assurance of a prosperous and vigorous prosecution of the war in all quarters.

The American, at Halifax, brings European news to the 20th ultimo, two days later.

The London journals had anticipated the capture of New Orleans by instituting an editorial canvass of the effect of such a result of the advance of the Union armies southward. It seemed to be con-

ceded that the fall of the city would be very disastrous to the rebel cause, the London *Times* asserting that the "occupation of that place by the federals would be a tourniquet (or ligature) tightened near the great artery of secession."

The London *Herald*—organ of the feudal lords and aristocrats—indulges in sneers at the strength of the United States government, intimating that the protraction of the war shows that it is unable for the task before it. The *Herald* also advises an intervention on the part of the "great Powers" should our Executive "fall after one more chance."

Spain, it is now said, will retain her foothold in Mexico until all her claims, as advanced at first, are settled.

The Austrian government is to despatch Scientific Commissioners to the United States to examine and report on the Monitor, the Merrimack, and our coast defenses.

The testing of iron armor plates for war vessels was still carried on in England and France.

CONGRESS.

In the Senate yesterday, a number of petitions in favor of a bankrupt law were presented and referred. A resolution, offered by Mr. Davis, of Kentucky, declaring that the war now carried on by the United States of America shall be vigorously prosecuted and continued to compel obedience to constitutional laws in the limits of every State and Territory by all the citizens and residents thereof, and for no further end whatever, was on motion of Mr. Sumner, laid over.

The resolution directing the Military Committee to inquire whether any further legislation is necessary to prevent soldiers and officers from returning fugitive slaves to their owners was called up by Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Sumner declaimed at some length against the action of General Hooker, General McCook, General Buell, General Halleck and the Provost Marshal of Louisville, as regards fugitive slaves. At the expiration of the morning hour the consideration of the Confiscation bill was resumed.

Mr. Wilson, of Massachusetts, offered an amendment to the bill, authorizing the President to issue a proclamation and free the slaves of all those who continue in rebellion against the United States thirty days thereafter. The debate continued; but no action was taken on the amendment, and after an executive session the Senate adjourned.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Blair explained the provisions of the bill providing for a Board of Fortifications, to provide for seacoast and other defenses, and the consideration of the bill was postponed till Tuesday week. Bills for the better organization of the Adjutant General's Department, and to render freedom national and slavery sectional, were reported, the latter by Mr. Lovejoy, from the Committee on Territories. The remainder of the session was spent in Committee of the Whole on the Pacific Railroad bill.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

The America, from Liverpool on the 19th and Queenstown on the 20th of April, reached Halifax yesterday evening on her voyage to Boston. Her news is two days later.

Cotton closed in London on the 19th of April at 93½ a bale for money. American securities are reported dull on the same day. The Liverpool cotton market continued closed, on account of Easter, on the 10th ultimo; but some three thousand bales changed hands at firm prices. Flour was tending upward and the provision market likely to decline.

The Russian government was taking measures to hasten the emancipation of the serfs. The speeches lately delivered by Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone in the British Parliament, on the affairs of Italy, gave great delight to the liberal party in that country. It was rumored that the French police had arrested twelve hundred workmen on a charge of sedition.

The rebel General John C. Breckinridge, in his official report, gives the following as the number lost in his brigade in the battle of Pittsburg Landing:

Killed. Wounded. Missing.		
Third Kentucky.....	27	10
Fourth Kentucky.....	131	21
Fifth Kentucky.....	34	27
Sixth Kentucky.....	12	90
Cobb's Light Artillery.....	5	31
Clifford's Battery.....	29	13
Byrnes' Battery.....	1	10
Total.....	127	320
Aggregate loss.....		648

The official report of General Samuel R. Curtis gives the following as the Union loss at the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas:

Killed.....	263
Wounded.....	972
Missing.....	179
Total.....	1,314

According to General Floyd's explanation of his official report he carried off only one thousand two hundred and thirty-six men from Fort Donelson. They belonged to the following regiments, which were attached to his brigade:

Thirty-sixth Virginia.....	243
Fiftieth Virginia.....	285
Fifty-fifth Virginia.....	274
Clifford's Virginia.....	229
Twentieth Mississippi.....	300
Total.....	1,336

General Beauregard, in his first despatch to the rebel Secretary of War, announcing his "victory" at Pittsburg Landing, said "we have taken from eight to ten thousand prisoners." In his second despatch he reduces the number "from six to eight thousand," and in his official account he makes the number "over three thousand." It appears now that there were only two thousand three hundred and eighty-six in all. If General Beauregard has not lost his life, he has certainly lost his character for truth.

There is now no doubt that the battle at Corinth is on the point of taking place. If, indeed, it has not already been fought. General Pope arrived with his reinforcements on Monday morning, and General Mitchell, although at Huntsville on the 23d, had ample time to join his forces with those of General Halleck before Tuesday, the 29th.

The Legislature of Massachusetts adjourned sine die at half past eleven o'clock on Wednesday night.

Miss Philomena Hildebrand, who formerly resided with her parents in Brooklyn, has brought a suit for breach of promise of marriage and seduction against Mr. William Hill, a wealthy brewer of Chicago. The damages are laid at \$10,000, and Mr. Hill has been held to bail in \$20,000.

The Louisville *Journal* learns from an escaped prisoner that the rebels displayed the most revolting barbarity when they first attacked our army at Pittsburg Landing. It says they actually cut the throats of sick soldiers as they lay in their tents.

General Fremont left Wheeling on the 29th ult. for the interior of Western Virginia. The particular point he will go to would be open to dispute. We know where he ought to go with a portion of his force. His department takes in part Tennessee, where, according to all accounts, the Unionists are suffering to a greater extent than in any other part of the country. To do good service Fremont should establish his headquarters in Knoxville as soon as possible.

The Pittsburg *Journal*, an abolition journal, gives the exact number of men, according to the muster rolls, in General Halleck's army.

The Union feeling in Tennessee is spreading to an "alarmed" extent.

William K. Kilpatrick, belonging to Company B,

Third Tennessee regiment, one of the rebel prisoners in Camp Douglas, has been committed to prison in Chicago on a charge of murdering Thos. M. Golden, belonging to the same company.

General McKim's headquarters at St. Louis, whose conduct the Congressional Investigating Committee scrutinized so closely, is about to publish a vindication of his official acts.

The negroes of Boston held a meeting on Monday to consider the subject of colonization. They passed resolutions opposing the idea of being removed either to a foreign country or to any part of the United States.

The Board of Councilmen met last evening and disposed of a number of routine papers. A number of property owners sent in a petition for the establishment of a ferry from the foot of Twenty-third street, North river, to North First street, Jersey City, which was referred to the Committee on Ferries. In reply to a resolution of inquiry, the Street Commissioner informed the Board that the Independent Telegraph Company had been requested to remove poles that had been erected in various parts of the city without permission of the Common Council. A report of the Committee on National Affairs adverse to applications of various regiments for appropriations for uniforms was adopted. A resolution appropriating \$1,600 to enable the trustees of the Five Points House of Industry to pay the assessment on their property was adopted. A large batch of "general orders," being resolutions pertaining to unimportant matters, were adopted, after which the Board adjourned till Monday.

The Hackley contract case was again before Judge Barnard, in the Supreme Court, yesterday, on a motion to have the order of the Court set aside for the appointment of a receiver. Counsel stated various objections; and, after argument, the Court named Mr. Samuel Donaldson, of Fultonville, in this State, as receiver. The further consideration of the order on the points submitted was postponed.

The examination of Abraham M. Hoyt, Nelson Evans and Ezra H. Spiers was commenced before United States Commissioner Stillwell yesterday. The charge against the accused is, that in New Lebanon, Columbia county, a store in which the post office was located had been set on fire, for the purpose of recovering the amount of insurance effected, and that, in the conflagration, letters, &c., were destroyed. The defence denies the alleged incendiarism, and charges that the insurance companies had employed one of the witnesses to expend five hundred dollars to procure evidence against the accused. Mr. Andrews appeared for the government. The case will be resumed.

As was to have been expected, the stock market reacted yesterday morning, after the sudden rise of the three previous days. There were large sales of governments, apparently for account of parties who had been buyers at lower prices, and the general aspect of the market was better. The stock of gold and bonds were, however, in even better demand than the day before, and at the close the whole market rallied, closing firm. Money was easy at 5 per cent. Exchange moderately active at 112½ a 100. The alarm had a tendency to check business.

The cotton market was irregular yesterday, especially in the forenoon; but there was more tone visible in the afternoon, and holders exhibited rather more firmness. The sales, in small lots, footed up about 500 bales, chiefly on the basis of 25½ cts. a bale, including random lots at a trifle above or under these figures. According to a telegraphic despatch, via Chicago, received yesterday, the Memphis papers of the 29th April stated that a convention of cotton planters had been held at Memphis, Tennessee, at which it was decided to restrict the production of cotton to 600,000 bales to the hand, and to tax all exceeding that amount \$25 per bale. The usual average yield to the hand, on good land, is from four to five bales of 40 pounds each, or from 1,600 pounds to 2,000 pounds to each hand, with sufficient provisions for support. Some bales weigh 50 pounds. This reduction, if carried out, will reduce the yield enormously, compared to the average crop of preceding years. Flour was firmer for low grades, while other kinds were unchanged, and sales moderate. Wheat was irregular, but firmly held, while sales were limited. Corn was less active, while sales embraced mixed Western at 51c. a 56c. in store and delivered. Ties were more buoyant and active, owing to the large stock; sales of mess were made at \$12 50 a \$13 75, and of prime at \$10 a \$10 25; the stock of all kinds out to 600,000 pounds to the hand, while the stock of best super was \$2,700 bbls. Sugar was steady with sales of 500 lbs. 100 boxes and 2,000 lbs. 100 lbs. Coffee was quiet; some inquiry prevailed for export. Freight was firm, with moderate engagements.

The impending struggle in Virginia and the Southwest—The Strategy of the Enemy.

We were enabled to publish yesterday exclusively several columns of highly interesting Southern news, including extracts from the Confederate press fully confirming the capture of New Orleans, and proving that the blow is felt all over the South as a most serious disaster, only second in its consequences to the destruction of Beauregard's army. But a most important piece of intelligence regarding the plans of the rebels in Virginia was contained in the extract which we reproduced from the Richmond *Enquirer*. It shows that the leaders calculate by their strategy to achieve a victory in Virginia which will compensate for their loss of New Orleans. Aware of the numbers, movements and destination of the force under Gen. Banks and the army of Gen. McDowell, the War Department of the rebels has sent heavy columns to oppose them and prevent their junction; otherwise "Richmond would be threatened from the direction of the Potomac with sixty thousand men."

The *Enquirer* concludes, therefore, that "it is very probable that a decisive battle may be fought north of Richmond before that on the peninsula has transpired." "One Corinth," the writer continues, "is on the Chickahominy, and our children somewhere in advance in Carolina or Louisiana. We should not be surprised at hearing within a week of a fierce battle on this advanced theatre, wherever it may be." As this was written more than a week ago, news of the fight may, therefore, reach us at any moment. If the calculations of the *Enquirer* are correct, Jackson, we are informed, is only retreating till he gets the column of Banks and the column of McDowell both in his front, and then he will give them battle, being a fine fighting man. The *Enquirer* boasts that their armies can whip ours anywhere off the water courses, where we are only succeeded by the aid of our gunboats. And this is the reason assigned for bringing about the "decisive battle" in the interior, thus justifying the suspicion we recently threw out in these columns, that leaving a comparatively small force at Yorktown to keep McClellan in check, the rebel chiefs would attempt to bust their main army against Banks and McDowell, in order to crush them in succession before they could unite with each other or with McClellan. It is more than possible that this is their strategy, and it is undoubtedly what shrewd generals would do under the circumstances. The *Enquirer* says that the number of the rebel troops concentrating on the lines north of Richmond is ample to withstand and repulse the forces of Banks and McDowell; and the Charleston *Mercury* assures us that "General Lee, General Johnston and General Randolph, the Secretary of War, concur in the confident belief that the Confederates will certainly beat the invading armies in Virginia, and that Richmond cannot be taken." It is worth while for the War De-

partment at Washington to inquire whether any false strategical step has been taken on our side that can justify this apparently strong confidence, and, if so, that the error be rectified before it is too late.

It is barely possible that the Richmond *Examiner* may have published the article we have quoted to mislead our generals, in order that McClellan may be weakened by sending reinforcements to McDowell, and thus be made the prey of Johnston. The Richmond *Dispatch*, indeed, of a later date (the 26th of April) publishes an article which rather conflicts with that in the *Examiner*, and places the bulk of the army in Virginia still at Yorktown. It says there is a more powerful force under Johnston, in the peninsula, than that with which Beauregard defends the Southwest—a statement certainly inconsistent with the idea of another force sufficient to repel sixty thousand men being concentrated north of Richmond to meet Banks and McDowell. One statement or the other is false; for the whole rebel army in Virginia cannot amount to any such numbers as would make both true. It is important that the War Department and the generals of our army should ascertain where the truth lies, and act accordingly.

One of the Southern journals consoles itself for the news of the disastrous capture of New Orleans by the consideration that "the large and fine army which was assigned for the defence of New Orleans can now be united with the army at Corinth in time to assist in the great work of driving the Vandals out of Tennessee and Kentucky, and in a march across the Ohio." The writer goes on to urge the invasion of the Northwest by Beauregard with 150,000 men, while, with 150,000 more, Johnston invades the North and captures Philadelphia and New York. This is gaseousness of the tallest kind, to break the force of the stunning blow of the capture of New Orleans. While Halleck takes good care of one, McClellan will dispose of the other, and our Southern contemporary may rest assured that neither Beauregard nor Johnston will ever set foot on Northern soil unless as a prisoner of war.

The Debate in the House on the Committee of Inquiry into Contracts.

The debate in the House of Representatives, on Tuesday last, on the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Government Contracts, is full of interest and very suggestive. One can hardly peruse the several speeches of the members engaged in this debate, or reflect upon the spectacle exhibited, without a painful feeling of commingled sorrow and indignation; of sorrow at discovering that at such a great crisis as the present patriots and the desire to save the Union enter less into the minds of the radical Jacobin republicans than the love of gain; of indignation at the thought that men who possess such immaculate political purity should be found on the side of speculators, plunderers and contracting gamblers, endeavoring to thwart all the efforts of Congress to search out and unmask the thieves and robbers who have laid their rapacious hands on the Treasury. Such an open and daring onslaught on a committee of investigation was never before seen in the history of parliamentary bodies. In the English Parliament such inquiries by committee are of common occurrence; but never, we believe, has been seen in the House of Commons such a spectacle as a body of men in the House itself attacking a committee and seeking to save the guilty.

It was not until the moral sense of the community had been shocked by the announcement of gross and outrageous frauds committed upon the government; it was not before the voice of an outraged people had loudly called for investigation, that this committee was appointed. In due time it makes its report, bringing to light transactions the enormity of which is a disgrace and a shame, and enough to make every honest man shudder. But what do we witness in consequence? A number of individuals belonging to the party of Greeley pures—men who, like that general of the black brigade, have held themselves up to the public as absolute immaculates and incorruptible opponents of jobbery and frauds—start up instantly on the floor of the House to attack the committee and its report, and defend a number of the most shameless plunderers of their country.

In the debate Mr. Conkling, of New York, opened the ball by protesting against the original formation of the committee, denouncing it most illogically as an "advisory board" to supervise questions of integrity relating to every man engaged in the administration of departmental affairs." But this very point which he assails so fiercely is one of the first and highest duties and privileges of a parliamentary body—viz: to inquire, to investigate and search out into frauds affecting the nation.

The "extraordinary gentleman from New York," as Mr. Washburne ironically called Mr. Conkling—and he is an extraordinary gentleman: so are they all—all extraordinary gentlemen—who have labored against the vital interests of the country, and sought to uphold and screen men engaged in plundering and defrauding the people, the army and the government—this extraordinary man was not simply satisfied with attacking the House itself in the matter of privilege; but he went further—disfiguring himself for the title ironically bestowed upon him—and descended, in his efforts to produce an impression against the committee, to the meanness of charging that this committee had, as is uniformly the practice with all travelling committees, received payment of its expenses.

Other extraordinary gentlemen attacked the report, and labored to throw the agis of their patronage over a gang of plunderers and robbers. The debate waxed warm, and was rendered quite interesting by the able reply of Mr. Washburne, who met the whole plenary lance in hand, and drove them to the wall, including Mr. Stevens, of Pennsylvania, who, in a former debate, had taken the same ground in support of peculation and plunderers. The conduct of all these persons was set in its true light by this gentleman. Altogether it was a spicy and animated debate, and will be a productive of much good. The insidious opponents of investigation, the sustainers of fraud and robbery, will now find the country more determined than ever in insisting upon having all plunderers and thieves hunted up and punished. Congress will see the necessity of doing its duty in the premises, unmoved by the attacks and special pleadings of some of their own body, who, by solicitations at least, are little better than partisans of the guilty.

The Philosophy of Taxation.

The Old World, after long trial and experience, has made the discovery of a general principle which may be considered as an axiom in the philosophy of taxation. It is, that the smaller the number of objects taxed so much the better, both for revenue to the government and ease to the people. There are many advantages gained by acting upon this principle, one of the chief of which is that it saves great expense in the collection. Another is, that a large revenue may be raised without odious and oppressive interference with individual and domestic privacy. In conformity with this rule, England has of late years abolished an infinite number of small and oppressive taxes, and confines herself to a few simple objects of direct taxation. Her greatest revenue is derived from taxes few in number, such as the income tax, that on spirituous liquors, tobacco and salt. France follows a similar policy.

Our Congress, not heeding the admonitions of experience, has begun at the wrong end, and has acted upon the plan of a small tax upon an infinite variety of articles. This is radically wrong. Much the better policy is to tax a few articles heavily, such as tobacco and whiskey, and to derive the chief revenue from them, rather than to plague and torment the people with an endless number of small taxes, imposed upon a great number of petty articles, such as watches, umbrellas, and so forth. It is a delusion to suppose that such a system would be less onerous to, and better received by the public, than a heavy taxation upon a few articles. Not only will this method of taxation subject every family to a most odious system of espionage and inquisition, but it would turn out to be very unproductive. So large a force of taxgatherers would be required as to swallow up the greater portion of the expected revenue in the expenses of collection. It is the old method, which has been tried in several countries in Europe and found wanting. It is also extremely odious and disagreeable to the people generally.

England is at this day more highly taxed than she was fifty years ago; but, from the improved system now adopted, there is not half as much discontent heard in that country as formerly used to be the case, when hats, watches, window lights and other small matters were made to pay taxes. In many of such small things it was found that the produce of the tax was no more than barely sufficient to pay for the collection. Congress, it seems, has listened too easily to the piteous complaints of individuals interested in special articles of trade, and under the pressure of their reclamations has resorted to the erroneous philosophy of a vast and multifarious system of taxation. Thus, for example, in the case of tobacco, a commodity which might be made to pay at least a fourth or fifth of the whole sum required to be raised, Congress has fixed the maximum amount of the tax at about ten cents per pound.

Now, according to the true law of the philosophy of taxation, this is all wrong. Instead of so small an amount on tobacco, with taxes of a still smaller amount on an infinite variety of other matters, it would be more profitable to the Treasury, and less burdensome to the people, to wipe out one-half or more of all this petty taxation, and tax tobacco, say forty cents per pound, which would produce at once a revenue of sixty millions of dollars. This is the true policy.

Can anything be more absurd than to expect to raise a revenue by taxes upon brooms, wooden pails, chairs, straw hats, watches, bonnets, men's hats and caps, loop skirts, ready made clothes, pins, umbrellas, parasols, wooden clocks, nails, wire, shoe blacking, stockings, shingles, shoe lasts, shovel handles, yachts, pianos, silver spoons, &c., &c., &c.?

All this is absurd, and if it were not a highly dangerous experiment it would be perfectly ridiculous. Such a system—so petty, so paltry, so mean—would inflame the minds of the most patriotic, most Union-devoted men. It would expose our homes and firesides to the most odious and vexatious intrusions and inquisitorial examinations. It would be intolerable; nay, it would be enough to raise another rebellion and another civil war of a formidable character. Surely the genius of folly, meanness and stupidity dictated such a system. It is altogether opposed to the true philosophy of taxation, and to the plainest dictates of prudence and common sense.

Such minute taxation is easily levied indirectly by the various custom houses on importations; for then the articles are all brought together under the eye of the collector, and the public is not tormented, a few importers paying all the duties. But it will never do to create an army of internal collectors to hunt up all these little articles in the dwellings of the people, and then collect a tax upon each one. It is not only absurd, but impracticable. It would seem as if the bill, as it thus stands, has been concocted by some custom house officers, according to the customs system. But it will never do for a system of direct taxation. We repeat, it is opposed to tried experience, and is contrary to every sound principle of the philosophy of taxation.

A GENERAL BANKRUPT LAW.—Since the bill reported to the House of Representatives by Mr. Conkling was laid upon the table, thus virtually disposing of it for the present session, petitions have been daily pouring in from all parts of the country, praying the House not to adjourn without legislating upon the subject of a general bankrupt law. We ourselves are constantly in the receipt of letters calling upon us to press the matter upon Congress. We have just not opportunistly of earnestly enforcing the necessity of the immediate passage of this or some other bill affording relief to the large class of honest but unfortunate traders who are disabled, by the absence of the protection which a bankrupt law would afford them, from resuming business on their own account. If there was a necessity for it in ordinary times, there is a double necessity for it now, when so many have been ruined by the rebellion. A measure which would enable these persons to commence their commercial career afresh, and which would at the same time provide severe punishments for fraudulent traders, would be a great boon to the country. It would contribute to the impulse which business of every sort will receive when the war is ended, by helping to restore confidence and to render commercial operations more secure. We must, therefore, that Congress will not separate without passing the present or some other enactment which will meet the requirements of our business community. Next to the Tax bill this is one of the measures most demanded by the necessities of the country.

May Day.—Yesterday was an unfortunate day for those whom the inexorable usages of our New York system of house letting compelled to move their *lars and pence*. Nothing could exhibit more unpleasantly the absurdity of the custom than the piles of costly furniture and bedding that were to be seen everywhere passing through the streets under the drenching rain that fell throughout the day. What a number of careful housewives and particular old maids must have had their hearts wrung and their tempers soured by the damage done by it to their goods and chattels. How many again must have had occasion to curse a usage which compelled them to move into a tenement just as its last occupants were leaving it.

There is not the slightest excuse for the inconvenience and annoyance to which householders are thus exposed. In European countries houses can be rented at any period of the year, there being no particular day for an annual "fitting," as with us. Here the custom originated in the avarice and tyranny of landlords, who sought by it to keep up an artificial value for house property.

The war will rectify this, as it is already reforming many other abuses. Landlords are learning that it is better to own moderate sized houses, the value of which cannot be disturbed by commercial or political revolutions, than expensive ones, the rents of which are liable to depreciation from every passing crisis. Thus, while mansions which were renting at from one thousand to three thousand a year have sunk from thirty to forty per cent in value, the rents of small houses have undergone no reduction, and no difficulty is found in letting them. In fact, this year it is, as a general thing, found impossible to let large houses. The altered circumstances of the country have deprived people of the means of keeping up heavy establishments, and the prospective visits of the taxgatherer render those who possess settled incomes more careful than ever about their expenditure. The fact that an immense number of houses remain unrented at the commencement of the present quarter will in itself go far to abolish the foolish custom of compelling a whole community to move on May day. Many are holding back, from a conviction that some weeks hence landlords will be disposed to let their houses at lower rates. Thus the first step is taken towards abolishing this inconvenient usage, and in another year or two we shall probably witness an entire change in the present system of house letting.

IMPORTANT FROM WASHINGTON

Official Reports of a Day to the President.

The Capture of Fort Macon, Surrender of New Orleans, and Retreat of Beauregard to Memphis.

Appointment of a Collector for New Orleans.

Military Governors for Recovered States.

Debate in the Senate on the Confiscation Question.

Proposed Emancipation of the Slaves of Rebels by Proclamation.

WASHINGTON, May 1, 1862.

CAPTURE OF FORT MACON.—RENDERED OF NEW ORLEANS.—BEAUREGARD RETREATING TO MEMPHIS.—The President received to-day a despatch from Fort Macon, stating that a *Roundshot Enquirer* received three announcements that Fort Macon had capitulated, New Orleans formally surrendered, and that Beauregard was falling back with his whole army to Memphis.

THE NEW STATE GOVERNMENTS.—OFFERING TRADE AT NEW ORLEANS.

The Hon. Edward Stanley is now on his way from Cuba, and will be here in a few days. It is known that he comes at the request of the President for the purpose of taking the office of Military Governor of North Carolina, his native State. He formerly represented the "Old South" in Congress, and was a prominent whig politician.

It is understood that the administration have already one or two prominent gentlemen in view to occupy the same position in Louisiana. The Unionists of that State are opposed to the appointment of Major General Butler to that office, and are in hopes that the President will select "any other man."

The President sent to the Senate to-day the nomination of Charles C. Lathrop as Collector of the port of New Orleans. Now that that port is opened the merchants were anxious for the arrival of the "Yankees," in order to get better prices for their goods, will have an opportunity of giving the new collector a good reception.

APPOINTMENTS CONFIRMED.

The Senate to-day, in executive session, confirmed the following nominations:—Charles L. Lathrop, to be Collector of Customs for the District of New Orleans, La. a gentleman formerly resident in New Orleans, but left there on the breaking out of the rebellion.

W. T. Sherman, Major General.
Samuel P. Carter, of Tennessee, Brigadier General of Volunteers.
Artemus Chapel, of Nebraska, and Theodore Heard, of Massachusetts, Brigades Surgeons.

Charles M. Provost and Cyrus S. Haldeman, both of Pennsylvania, and Marcellus V. G. Strong, of New York, Assistant Adjutants General, with rank of captain.

K. D. Willard, of the District of Columbia, Comptroller of Subtreasuries.

NAVAL APPOINTMENTS.

The Navy Department has made the following appointments:—

Charles O'Neil, of Boston, Master's Mate on the Cumberland, promoted to Acting Master, and ordered to the Boston Navy Yard.

Heinrich B. Richardson